

News Release

For Immediate Release

June 14, 2008

Four more counties added to disaster declaration; state receives other federal approvals

INDIANAPOLIS (June 14, 2008) - President George W. Bush today has approved four more Indiana counties for federal assistance for homeowners, renters and businesses. That brings the total number of approved Indiana counties to 26.

The President's action makes federal funding available to affected individuals in Hamilton, Parke, Putnam and Randolph counties. Three of those counties (Hamilton, Parke and Putnam) were not on the original list of 44 counties declared as disasters by Governor Mitch Daniels. But they have been added and received approval because the state has met the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) threshold for damage from the series of storms that struck from May 30 to June 7. These counties are close or contiguous to others that previously have been declared as disasters and have isolated areas of damage. It is likely there are only a limited number of individuals and businesses that will qualify for assistance in those counties.

Counties that already have been approved for assistance are Adams, Bartholomew, Brown, Clay, Daviess, Dearborn, Greene, Hancock, Henry, Jackson, Jennings, Johnson, Knox, Marion, Monroe, Morgan, Owen, Rush, Shelby, Sullivan, Vermillion and Vigo counties. Knox County also was not on the original list of 44.

Damage assessments for other counties are continuing and are being submitted to the federal government as they are completed.

Assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster.

Residents and business owners who sustained losses in those counties can begin applying for assistance now by registering online at

<http://www.fema.gov/> or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired. The toll-free telephone numbers will operate from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (local time) seven days a week.

The governor also said the state has received several other federal approvals that will help Hoosiers impacted by severe storms in Indiana.

Agriculture

U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Edward Schafer told the governor on Friday that any county declared a disaster area by President Bush would also receive agricultural disaster designation. The disaster designation allows farmers in the counties that have so far been approved for individual assistance to apply for low-interest emergency loans from the USDA Farm Service Agency.

Daniels also requested that Secretary Schafer activate and fund three conservation programs to assist Hoosier farmers with sediment build-up, topsoil erosion, debris removal and wash-outs which will keep many farmers out of their fields and prevent replanting, haying or any other activity. He also encouraged USDA to make full use of its authority and programs to find meaningful ways to help livestock farmers in need.

State Highways

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration has approved the state's application for emergency relief funds. That means Indiana will have up to \$100 million more available for state highway repairs and full reimbursement for temporary repairs to state highways as well as expedited review, approval, contract letting and permitting processes to speed up work.

Public Health

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has declared a public health emergency that will waive some rules for health care providers and the services they provide. For example, Medicare Part D recipients who have damaged or destroyed residences will be able to obtain prescription refills. The Department of Health and Family and Social Services Administration will follow up with more information on Monday.

Food Stamps

The USDA has given approval to issue emergency food stamps in the first eight counties that received approval for individual assistance - Bartholomew, Hancock, Johnson, Morgan, Marion, Monroe, Vermillion and Vigo - and other counties are expected to be added at the beginning of the week. The Disaster Food Stamp program may help county residents who were affected by the disaster, including those not currently receiving state assistance. More information is available from the Family and Social Services Administration.

More information about Indiana's response to severe weather may be found at this link: www.emergency.in.gov

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